Doubts expressed about the accuracy of school history textbooks

By CY GROSVENOR

Few collections of myths can equal those to be found in the American History textbooks used in grammer schools and high schools.

Generations of pupils have read: "Queen Isabella pawned her jewels to raise the money to provide Christopher Columbus with ships for his voyage." No mas processor ever manufactured such pure baloney! The queen's jewels were, at that time, in hock to bankers as security for loans to pay for Spain's wars to drive the Moors from the country. Isabella pressured ship owners into loaning Columbus ships for his voyage.

Benjamin Franklin

The history books students use tell of Benjamin Franklin's famous kite experiment and name him "The discoverer of electricity." He wasn't. William Gilbert discovered and named electricity more than a hundred years before Franklin was born.

By Franklin's time the Leyden jar had been invented and "professors" traveled about the American Colonies giving electrical demonstrations. Franklin was intensely interested in electricity and made significant contributions to the science. He made improvements to the Leyden jar, coined the terms "positive" and "negative" and, after he had noted that pointed metal objects attracted electricity, invented the lightning rod; but he didn't "discover electricity." His kite experiment only proved that lightning is an electrical discharge.

Paul Revere

"One if by land and two if by sea; And I on the opposite shore will be Ready to ride and spread the alarm Through every Middlesex village and farm."

So wrote Henry Wadsworth Longfellow in his poem "The Midnight Ride of Paul Revere." Every school history textbook repeats the same story: that Paul Revere ("Apollos Rivoire" waited alone for the signal lanterns to be hung in the steeple of the Old North Church. He didn't. Beside him was another horseman who, when the lights were sighted, also rode to warn the patriots of the coming of the British. Revere's fellow rider was William Dawes, the forgotten man of American history.

It is only those historians who are painstaking in their research that mention Dawes. One of them is H.G. Wells in his "outline of History": page 678.

Bunker Hill

Every school history book tells of the Battle of Bunker Hill. Bunk it is. On a peninsula across the water from Boston were three rises. These elevations were known as "Breed's Hill," "Moulton's Hill" and "Bunker's Hill." The British mapmakers, Wheeler and Grant, incorrectly identified these hills. As result of their errors the Battle of Breed's Hill has gone down in history as "the Battle of Bunker Hill."

Every history student has read the tale of "The bitterly cold winter Washington and his troops spent at Valley Forge" and seen pictures of soldiers huddling over a fire, trying to keep warm. Both are gross exaggerations.

The winter Washington and the Army spent at Valley Forge (1777-78) was relatively mild. The troops were quartered in snug cabins, twelve men to each unit. It's true that the Army did suffer from want of equipment and supplies, due to the incompetence of those charged with the procurement and delivery of them.

The winter Washington spent in winter quarters at Morristown, New Jersey (1779-80) was the most severe of the 18th century.

Monitor-Merrimac

Then there is the tired myth of Monitor-Merrimac. An engagement between two such ouamed ships never took place. It's a fact: there never was a warship of any kind, Union or Confederate, that bore a name spelled M-e-r-r-i-m-a-c.

The Merrimack (note the "k"), a 50-gun frigate, was launched at Boston, June 14, 1855. She was named for the New England river that rises in New Hampshire and flows southward into Massachusetts. A New Hampshire city of the same name is located on the river. (See there label of the Budweiser bottle or can).

When the Norfolk Navy Yard was threatened with capture by the Confederates the commander panicked and ordered the yard burned and all ships in for repairs sunk. One of these ships was the Merrimack. The Confederates, casting about for a hull to use in the construction of an ironclad, decided that the Merrimack would fill the bill. They raised the sunken ship and towed it to the Gosport Navy Yard on the Elizabeth River. There the hull was used in the building of the Confederacy's first ironclad, the "Virginia."

It was the Virginia that wreaked havoc upon the wooden Union ships in Hampton Roads, March 8, 1862. The following day, when she returned to complete the destruction, she found the Monitor waiting to do battle.

If there be any die-hard believers in Monitor-Merrimac, let them take a trip to Newport News, Virginia. There they'll find displayed, in the Mariner's Museum, the original plans for the conversion of the U.S.S. Merrimack into the C.S.S. Virginia.

Slaves, Nonbreedge Lam

In a history book used in the local (Elmira, N.Y.) high schools, a textbook printed by Heath & Co., Boston, these are printed:

"Prior to the Civil War the Southern states depended on the South often conducted schools in which they taught promising young slaves to read and write." This is absolutely false. After the Nat Turner slave rebellion in 1831 every southern state passed laws making it a felony to teach a slave to read or write.

"The Stourbridge Lion, the first steam locomotive to run on tracks, was a run from Honesdale, Pa. to Carbondale Pa., August 8, 1829. The name of the locomotive and the date are correct. Nothing else is.

The Stourbridge Lion wasn't the first locomotive in America. The first was one built by Col. John Stevens and operated on a circular track on his estate in Hoboken, N.J., in 1826. Col. Stevens is often referred to as "The father of the Pennsylvania Railroad."

The Lion never made a run to Carbondale. The steep mountain ridge between Honesdale and Carbondale wasn't negotiated by a steam locomotive until 1899.

The Titanic

The popularity of the novel "Raise the Titanic" has aroused interest in the great sea disaster of April 14-15, 1912. In countless newspapers and magazine articles and in hundreds of books, including school textbooks, it has been stated that the vessel sank after it had "struck" an iceberg. The ship didn't "strike" the berg. "Strike" means: to come into forcible contact or collision. The Titanic only grazed the iceberg. That's what gave it its fatal wound. A projecting underwater ice shelf tore a long gash in the ship's hull.

The 20th Century-Fox version of the famous sinking, starring Clifton Webb and Barbara Stanwyck, has often been shown on television. In one of the final scenes Webb and the boy who plays his son are shown at the rail of the doomed liner singing the hymn "Nearer My God To Thee," as the band plays in the background.

The fallacy: that the ship's band of the Titanic played as its final number "Nearer My God To Thee" has been printed and read so many millions of times that it is a firmly believed as is Monitor-Merrimac. The band never played this hymn. That they did is just another myth that caught public fancy, and has persisted.

The sea historian, John Malcolm Brinnin, has written: "The band's final number was the Church of England hymn "Autumn." The plea it made was grotesquely pertinent: God of Mercy and Compassion, Look with pity on my pain. Hold me up mighty waiters, Keep my eyes on things Above.

Other writers; those who took the trouble to interview survivors of the sinking, all agree with Mr. Brinnin: that the ship's band played as a last selection "Autumn." Not "Nearer My God To Thee." Among these authors are: Walter Lord - "A Night to Remember" - page 96 and 174, and Mark Sullivan - "Our Times" - page 540 - Vol. 4.

In the British version of the sinking. Also often shown on television, the band plays "Autumn."

Aesop told first plays as a writer of fables. The authors of American History textbooks are close seconds.

WHEN THE CONFEDERATES tried to get the Virginia away for the advancing Union forces they found her deep in the James River too far from moving up the James River to safety. At 3 a.m. on the morning of May 11, 1862 she was run aground on Craney's Island and set afire. When the flames reached her magazine the blew up. (Postcard from a private collection)

Service marks close of 'Days of Prayer'

Father Michael J. Piccola will close the "Days of Prayer at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church. Three days were set aside for prayer, quiet time and reflection about the Eucharist, World Peace, The Value of Life in all Forms, together with the continued success of the Synod in Diocese of Scranton. The Prayer Days began on January 23 and will close tonight, January 25 with a Holy Hour and prayerful celebration of the Liturgy.

The homily will be given by Father Piccola who is a native of Hazelton. He completed his undergraduate studies at the University of Scranton. He has two advanced degrees, both Masters, one in the area of Theology, from St. Mary's Seminary and the other in Religious Education from Marywood College. Father Piccola is a full-time assistant pastor at Saint Rose of Lima Church. He is also the director of Religious Formation at Sacred Heart High School. Teaching and lecturing, together with public speaking are easily seen gifts of Father Piccola.

Father Michael Piccola

Liturgy will begin at 7:30 p.m. with the Sacrament of Reconciliation available from 6:30 until 7:15.

Father Andrew Gallia and Father Joseph Sica extend a warm welcome to all on this joyous evening.

Professional Wrestling Show
World Wrestling Federation
Through the sponsorship of the Waymart Volunteer Ambulance Corps

Saturday, February 18th
Western Wayne High School, 8:00 p.m.

SPECIAL TAG TEAM MATCH

IVAN "POLISH" PUTSKI INDIAN CHIEF JAY STRONGBOW	VS.	THE WILD SAMOANS "AFA and SEKA"
PAUL ORNDORF	VS.	S.D. JONES
INVADER #1	VS.	CHARLEY FILTON
Sensational Tag Team Match 4 OF THE BEST "MIDGET WRESTLERS" IN THE WORLD		
WILD SAMOAN #3	VS.	INVADER #2

TICKETS: $6.00 General Admission - $8.00 Reserved Ringside
TICKET OUTLETS: Waymart Cut Rate, Lake Ariel Dept. Store, Glinsky's Drug Store in Honesdale, Denm Designs in Hamlin, Ashman's Pharmacy in Carbondale, Western Wayne High School, Robert D. Wilson School.

John Gill, city native, named general counsel

John J. Gill, Carbondale native, has been named general counsel to the American Bankers Association.

He is the son of Mr. and Mrs. John J. Gill, formerly of Maple Ave., now residing in Washington, D.C.

Gill replaces former ABA general counsel William H. Smith, who recently retired. In making the announcement Alexander grained Smith for his dedicated service as general counsel to ABA during the past nine years.

As general counsel, Gill heads the ABA legal staff. Before his appointment, Gill was federal administrative counsel, Gill served as chief liaison between the ABA and federal regulatory agencies providing staff direction in the analysis of the impact upon banking of federal government proposals and actions in regulatory issues.

He joined the ABA in July 1964 upon graduation from the Georgetown University Law Center in Washinton, D.C. where he received his JD degree. He holds a BA in accounting from Mount St. Mary's College, Emmittsbugh, MD.

Gill, his wife Patricia and their three children live in Mitchellville, MD. He is a member of the American Bar Association and the District of Columbia Bar Association.

The American Bankers Association is the national trade and professional association for American Full Service Banks. The nearly 13,000 member banks represent approximately 95 percent of the industry total.

H&R Block
Tax Tip Of The Week

You are allowed an additional personal exemption if you are 65 or older on the last day of the year. For tax purposes, you are considered 65 on the day before you 65th birthday. Therefore, if your 65th birthday in on January 1, 1984, you may claim the extra exemption for age on your 1983 return.

You may be eligible for a tax credit if you are age 65 or older or are under age 65 and receive a pension or annuity from a public retirement system. The maximum credit is $375 for single individuals, $562.50 for married individuals filing a joint return, and $281.25 for married individuals filing a separate return. Married individuals must file a joint return to claim the credit unless they lived apart for the entire year.

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OFF OUR Reg. Low Price

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9:30 AM. to 5:00 PM.
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If you're reading this paper, you're ready for us

There are an amazing number of people in radio who think the entire world is under 20.

Trouble is, there's an almost equal number of radio people on the other side. They think everyone in the world is over 50.

Which is why it may seem like there's not radio for people like you, people who read beyond the comics.

You probably like good rock. That doesn't mean all guitars, though. Certainly not the same "Top 40" over and over 24-hours a day. It doesn't mean "golden oldies" going all the way back to the Dark Ages, either.

It does mean rock you can live with.

When you're done with the paper, give our music a try. We're the radio station for people who can read.

95.3 FM
WDNH - Honesdale
We're Good For Your Ears.
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Local Bowling Results

Academy Girls

In the Academy Girls' League, three point winners included Carra's Dress over Gene's Hair Fashions.

Teams winning two point were: No's over Christopher Jo's; Bobea's Good over Valley Lanes; Looking Good over Bunker's Hill.

The team high series of 784 was bowled by Carra's Dress, while the high single was rolled by No No's with a 425.

Individual honors went to Donna Dobkowski with a 551 series, and the individual high single was 215 by Anca Imperial.

Splits were converted by Linda Lee, Alice Leo, Teresa Molinaro, Mary Fran Grankowski, D'Ann Napa, Lisa Ferraro, Barbara Pedunski, Fits, Frank Gillett, dorothy Pepski, Susan Torrick, Barbara Pedunski and Irene Gangler.

Other good scores were: Hickie Impersonal, Christine Lee, Anna Imperial, Lil Dabkowski, 399; Bonnie Mackey, 394, 513; Ann Grandonico, 391; Dorothy Weyrosh, 384; Bunny Farber, 146; B J Stotler, 171; Ruth Fritz, 162; Mary Fryer, 139; Ann Marie Talasagi, 177; Helen Beierl, 195; Sally Acice Carra, 561 and Barbie Patshaker, 148.

Upper Valley Mixed

In the Upper Valley Mixed League, three point winners included Roemmelmayers over Mancuso Vending; Club 336 over Spectrum Ambulance; South Mahoy over Valley Lanes.

Teams winning two points were: Dorse Body Shop over Shifter Memorials; Relell Builders over Warren Body Shop; Proper Amusing over Jarmon Jewelers; Big Chief Pizza Hut Restaurant; A&L Hoagies over Wayne Family Restaurant; Durnwald's over P&H Home Improvement; Skippy Restaurant over Franks Barwasky Classics Inc. over Anna Hair Styling; Fun Tim Ceramics over Rockhands.

The team high series of 3139 was bowled by Relell Builders, while the high single was rolled by Mahoy Vitadka with a 146.

Individual honors went to Dorothy Pierlowski with a 567 series, and the individual high single was 219 by Kranl.

Splits were converted by L.Fran Grankowski, D.Dubchik, C.Virgilio, A.Pawlowski, B.Farrell, M.Belcher, and P.Pedunk.

Other good scores were: D.Kulick, 517; P.Bendorsky, 493, 179; G.Perry, 464, 170.

Tuesday Morning Blues

In the Tuesday Morning Blues League, four point winners included Sponsor: Construction over Dave Trucking; Chan's Country Tavern over Pizza Speeding Parlor.

Teams winning three points were: Chan's Sportswear over C.A.Inge Pingrese; John's General Store over Pizza Speeding Parlor.

The team high series of 1836 was bowled by Chan's Country Tavern, while the high single was rolled by Chan's Country Tavern with a 655.

Individual honors went to Kathy Schwartzmauder with a 201 series, and the individual high single was 86 by Kathy Schwartzmauder.

Splits were converted by Joanne Bittsoguis, Ruth O'Neill, Marilyn Kilmer, Dianne Griffin, Kathi Moyle, Mary Foy, Marlene Dean, Janice Buchko, Karin Babushuk, Debbie Kurtz, Rose Sula, and Cindy Kilhour.

Other good scores were: Pat Barney, 166, 427; Jeri Watson, 146; Joanne Resavage, 146, 414; Kathy Schwartzmauder, 184, 182, 501; Ann Marie Talasagi, 184, 182; Nancy Pishtiga, 147, 145, 146; Karin Marjorie Kilmer, 153, 460; Sharon Griffin, 176, 145, 430; Betty Mancuso, 150, 407; Kathi Moyle, 147; Sheila Kozlowski, 151, 411; Mary Foy, 151, 146; Janice Buchko, 152, 372; Janice Pasco, 146, 372; Sharon Dean, 146, 146, 489; Karin Babushuk, 161, 186, 487; Mary Foy, 184, 421; Leona Hanopolo, 146; Lori Sokinsky, 146, 147, 402; Marlene Dean, 155, 145, 444; Marian Soracio, 146, 146, 411; Dianne Griffin, 146, Kurtz, 175, 192, 143, 509; Rose Sula 145, 146, 476; Paula Mancuso, 138, 146, 173, 476; Kave Hollmauzer, 152, 192, 137, 522; Shirley Hunter, 162, 185; Mary Foy, Marlene Dean, Janice Buchko, Karin Babushuk, Debbie Kurtz, Rose Sula, and Cindy Kilhour, 1000.

Tuesday Night Ladies

In the Tuesday Night Ladies League, four point winners included Mancuso Construction over Fred's Car Center.

Other point winners: Mancuso Vending over Newsweek; Teams winning one point were: Bob's Card Shop over Bowlerama.

The team high series of 2276 was bowled by Mancuso Construction, while the high single was rolled by Mancuso Construction with a 776.

Individual honors went to J. Calisto with a 548 series, and the individual high single was 199 by Judy Kranl.

Splits were converted by L.Fran Grankowski, D.Dubchik, C.Virgilio, A.Pawlowski, B.Farrell, M.Belcher, and P.Pedunk.

Other good scores were: D.Kulick, 517; P.Bendorsky, 493, 179; G.Perry, 464, 170.

Valley Lanes Ladies Classic

In the Valley Lane Ladies Classic League, teams winning point were: C.J.Zazzera Construction, 19 pts.; George Mastis Electric, 17 pts.; Jenkins Funeral Home, 13 pts.

Teams winning one point were: Ken's Coal & Oil over Orlando's Lunch; First National Bank over Carlisle's Vending; J&B Bar over Pizza Curci; Smithy's Service Station over Mr. Chalet; Tinary's Insurance over Chick's Lounge and Morrison's Auto Body over Pierce Seafood.

The team high series of 2863 was bowled by Kennedy's Beer Distributor's, while the high single was rolled by Morrison's Catering with a 1000.

Individual men's honors were captured by Jim Gallis with a high series of 686. The high single was rolled by Sam Barrows with a 355 series, and the individual high single was 208 by Irene Barrows.

Other good scores were: Irene Barrows, 208; Lulu Leonard, 528; Ann Mastis, 206; Lucille Pronko, 515; Lois Keen, 399; Paula Johnson, 500.

Mayfield Businessmen

In the Mayfield Businessmen's League, three point winners included Ron Franks Builder's over Wise & Rowe Floral Boutique; Kennedy's Beer Distributor's over Catanch's Restaurant; Mayfield Hardware over Ken's Coal & Oil over Orlando's Lunch; First National Bank over Carlisle's Vending; J&B Bar over Pizza Curci; Smithy's Service Station over Mr. Chalet; Tinary's Insurance over Chick's Lounge and Morrison's Auto Body over Pierce Seafood.

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Newcomers

In the Newcomer's League, four point winners included Convenient Food Mart over Pizza Hut; Bon Ly K's over Michael Cerra's; Clifford Auto Center over Pierce Trucking.

Teams winning three points were: Dubrava over Vera Fashion; Beauty Shop.

The team high series of 2298 was bowled by Clifford Auto, while the high single was rolled by Clifford Auto with a 802.

Individual honors went to Judy Kranl with a 551 series, and the individual high single was 199 by Judy Kranl.

Splits were converted by L.Fran Grankowski, D.Dubchik, C.Virgilio, A.Pawlowski, B.Farrell, M.Belcher, and P.Pedunk.

Other good scores were: D.Kulick, 517; P.Bendorsky, 493, 179; G.Perry, 464, 170.

Saturday Night Mixed

In the Saturday Night Mixed League, three point winners included Zazzera's, Hotel Chelling and Wayman Knitwear.

Two point winners were: Annabito's Pizza over Jenkins Funeral Home; Dante Auto Parts over Forest City Big Chief; Dragos Masonary; Adena Fitness Center; Trichilo Woodwork.

Teams winning one point were: Valley Lanes, Carl's Body Shop, Reeve's Awning, The Barn, Mazza Pizza over Commers Marble's and Motor Donut.

The team high series of 3071 was bowled by Dragos Masonary, while the high single was rolled by Valley Lanes with a 746.

Individual honors went to Theresa Dragos with a 606 series, and the individual high single was 245 by Nancy Bell.

Individual men's honors were captured by Pete Karlewicki with a high series of 641. The high single was rolled by pete Karlewicki who had a 225.

The first half champions were Valley Lanes.

Other good scores were: Joanne Pazzaglia, 155; Joe Pazzaglia, 196; Doug Congdon, 146; Pat Trichilo, 161, 176; Jim Hodgson, 174, 201; Diane Maddage, 145, 146; Helen Varlotta, 150; Jim Vallepondes, 170, 181; Jim Pazzaglia, 146; Joe Paone, 146; Jim Rocha, 175, 186; Ed Greene, 161, 177; Rose Greene, 166; Terri Mangarella, 139, 146; Ann Marie Carrabba, 146, 150; Lori Lee, 168, 170; Bill Lee, 208, 170; Tom Lupus, 187; Theresa Lupus, 199; Jim Lupus, 174; Bruno Sarnai, 146; Yvonne Sarnai, 190; Jack Evans, 237; Mike Mondelli Davis, 170, 187; Jim Davis, 190; Elaine Nelson, 174, 171; Joanne Davis, 146; Ann Marie Davis, 146; Dick Nelson, 196, 170; Louise Congmham, 158; Marsha Carrabba, 186; Pete Cunningham 171, 188, 210; Brenda Leonard, 153; Betty Miller, 184; Ted Francis Leonard, 196, 186; Mark Leonard, 145, 178; Pete Leonard, 146, 170; Ann Marie Leonard, 146, 150